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ABSTRACT

This book attempts to make sense of the dynamics in higher education in Latin America and the Caribbean, examining institutions, rules, incentives, and functions. The analysis of the diverse experience of higher education in Latin America is linked to suggestions for policy reform. In particular, the book addresses principal myths that mischaracterize both the experience and the policies that could bring about positive reforms. Following the introductory chapter, Chapter 2, "Mixed Performance," offers a brief assessment of the accomplishments and shortcomings of higher education in Latin America. Chapter 3, "Differentiated and Complex Systems," provides a historical sketch of how the traditional university evolved into an array of activities that are often poorly served by present policy. Chapter 4, "A Typology of Distinguishing Myth from Reality," presents a typology of the key functions of higher education--academic leadership, professional development, technological training and development, and general higher education (quasi-professional or general education). Chapter 5, "Key Policy Issues," applies the analysis and topology to three salient policy issues--subsidies, governance, and tools for quality control. Finally, Chapter 6, "Between Status Quo and Neoliberal Extremes," contrasts the book's main points to a neoliberal agenda, highlighting differences as well as similarities. Contains approximately 160 references. (EV)

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